

# THE GAUNTLET:

## The Design of a Community Challenge Platform

#community #locative-media #pervasivegames #groupware



### Introduction

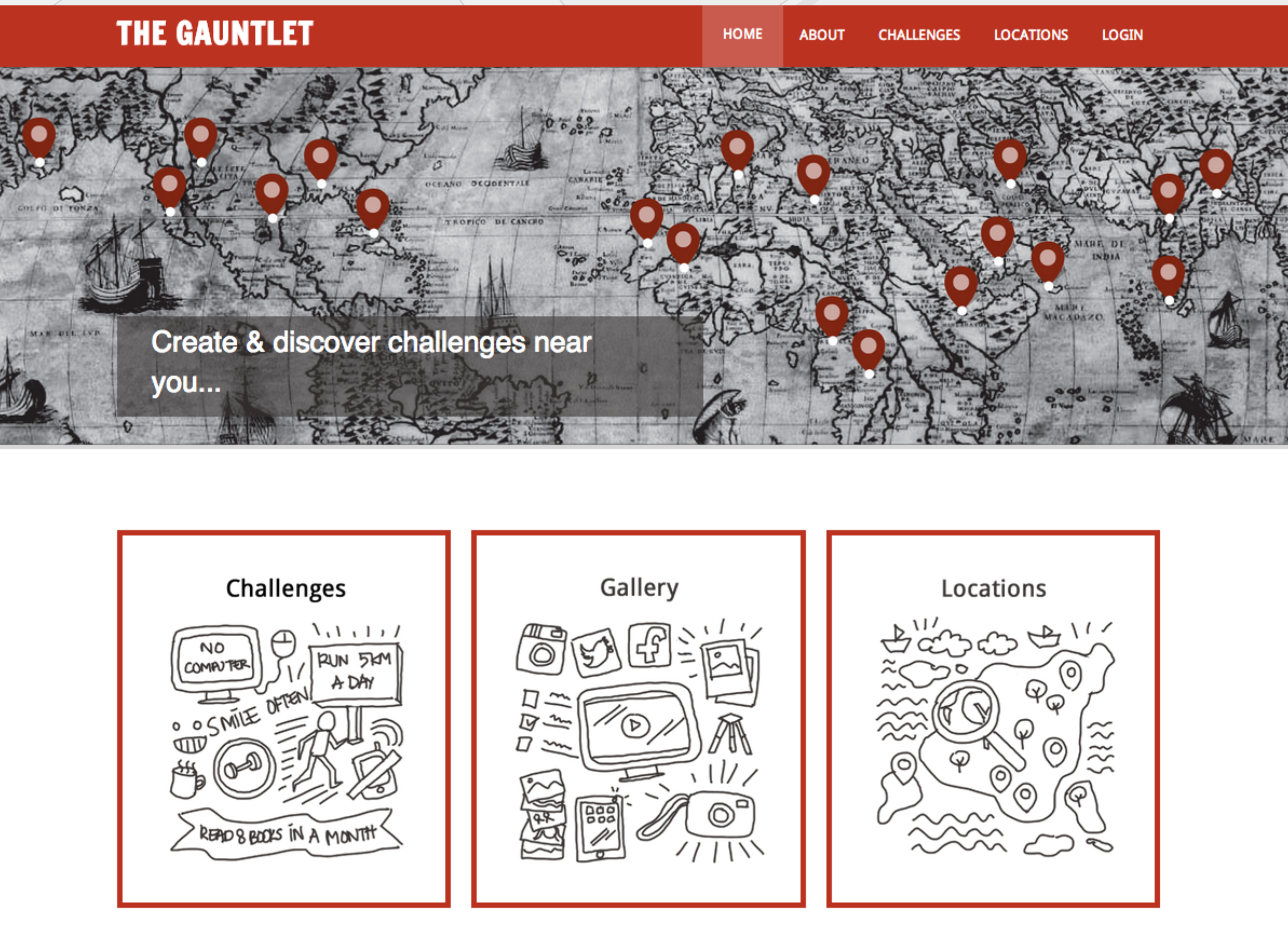
The system design proposed here, the Gauntlet, utilizes both gamification and pervasive approaches in developing a challenge-based game that can be played in the real word. Similar to most gamificaiton approaches, the challenges proposed in the Gauntlet aim to encourage players to participate in activities and challenges in their community. These challenges are user generated and span various themes, with an underlying focus of improving communities (from neighborhood citizenship to environmental sustainable practices), while making real-world settings more interesting. The goal of this research is to understand how to design a platform that facilitates user participation and community (online and offline) engagement using game-like mechanics.

### Study Design & Goals

To design the Gauntlet, we first conducted a participatory design activity. In the activity, we recruited 12 participants who were asked to create and design their own challenges. Each submitted details about what type of challenge they would create and who they would challenge with it. Overall, we saw that participants created a range of challenges yet there was a clear focus on challenges that involved interacting with strangers and local environment, particularly with a positive aspect. For example, having a “meaningful interaction with a stranger on a bus”. Participants also commented that if there was a ‘challenge system’ created, they would want it to include completion dates and a reward system, as well as more room for creativity. Following this activity, we used an autobiographical design approach to design the actual system.

### Final Design Interface

The online Gauntlet platform comprises of three main pages: Home, Challenge Description, and User Profile.



[Home Page]

#### Home Page

When users first visit the Gauntlet they are directed to the Home page where they can find a stream of challenges. The challenges are listed in sequential order based on how many other users have currently accepted that particular challenge. This default setting ensures that more interesting challenges (based on user preferences) rise to the top of the streaming challenges. Users can also choose to sort the stream of challenges based on most current, under the Newest tab, or by Most Saved or by Random order.

#### Challenge Description Page

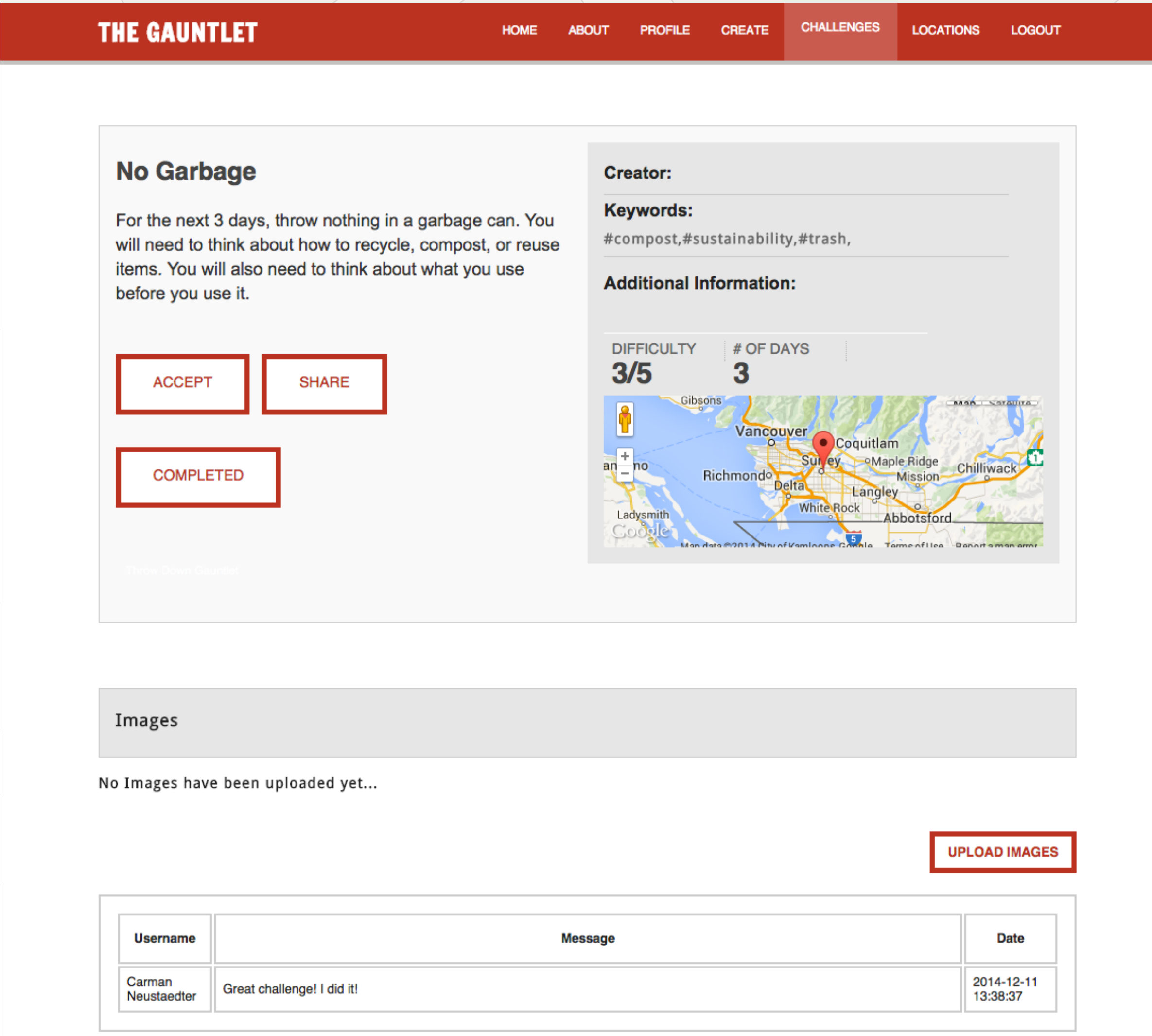
Users can then leave the Home page by clicking on any challenge, or by selecting any option at the bottom of the Home page. In this example, a user can click on the “mapURself” challenge and be redirected to the Challenge Description page. This page contains the challenge details in the top left (identical to the challenge template), but it also provides the user with more specific details about the particular challenge. Users can view who created the challenge and visit their profile description page.

#### User Profile Page

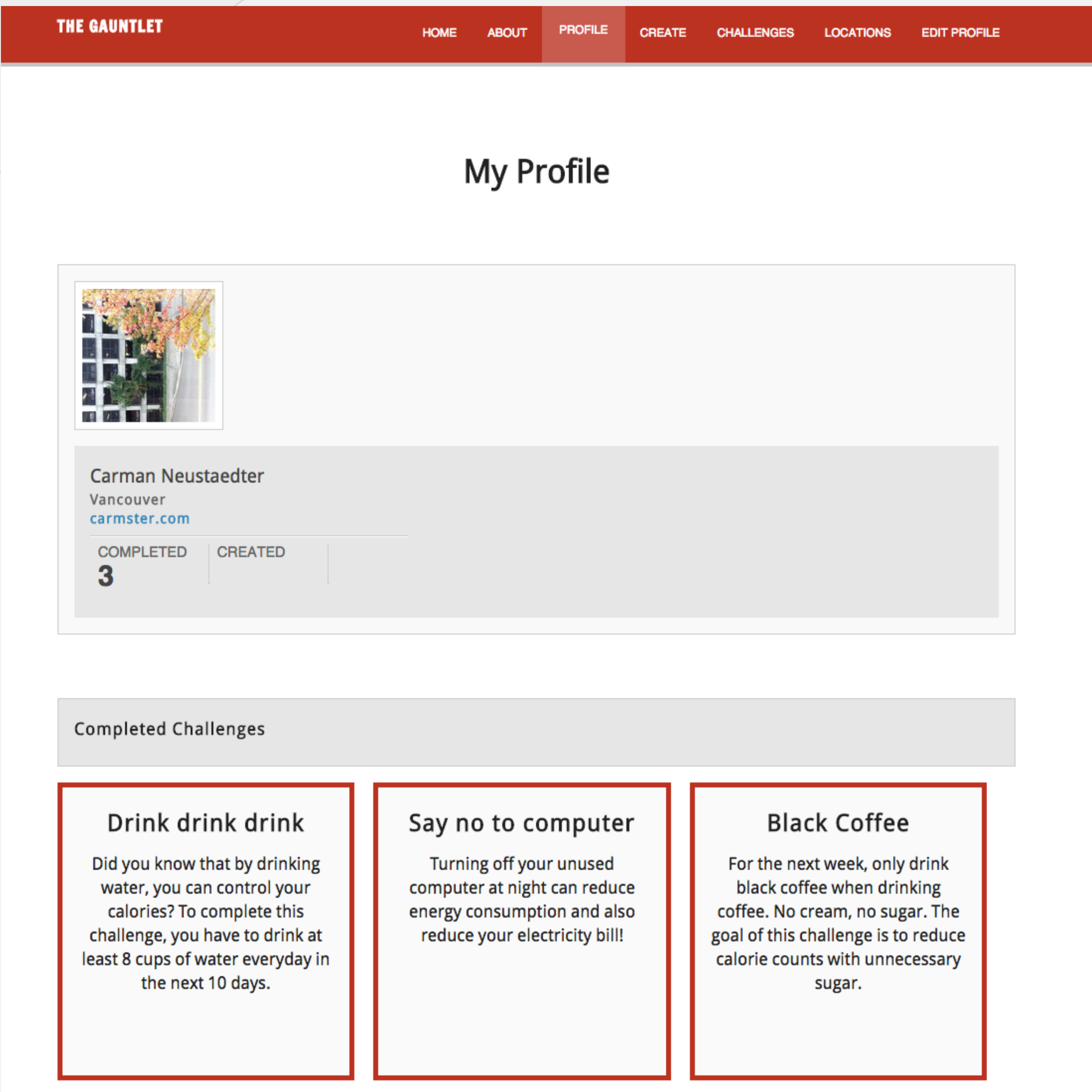
Social connection is further facilitated through personal user profile pages. Users can visit other pages by clicking on creator descriptions, hyperlinked usernames in the online forum board, or by searching for usernames. Users can also decide to add users to their Circle or Follow users. By adding a user to your circle, you can more easily coordinate completing challenges together as “knots”, as discussed previously. Users are also given the option to Follow users who they believe share similar interests or are creating and completing interesting challenges.

### Discussion

The system design presented in this paper sets out to create a platform in which users generate and accept challenges in real-world environments. We believe users have the ability to feel socially connected, are motivated to use the platform and complete challenges, as well as are provided with an opportunity to explore the design flexibility of the platform to meet their needs. We also believe the Gauntlet will be fun and interesting for users to explore as they complete challenges. We also believe that users will be given an opportunity to push their comfort zones and test their abilities. Lastly, we also feel that challenges within the Gauntlet will encourage users to experience novel activities and explore new environments.



[Challenge Description Page]



[User Profile Page]

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